

T H E

36

Practical Atheist:

O R

Blasphemous

C L U B S

Taxed.

The Second Edition Corrected by the
Author, a Lover of Poetry.

Chron: 33. 9. — *Even the Men of Judah
did worse than the Heathen.*



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IF any Skilful Hand should draw the Picture of the present debauched Generation, it might pass for an Original, no preceeding Age, having been so foul and deformed, as this; whereof we may say in the Words of Seneca, *Collecta Vitia, &c. Octavo P. 748. Line. 429 i. e.* The Vices of the past Generations gathered together, do all meet in our Day, wherein the most execrable Impietys Reign licentiously. Too many within the Pale of the Christian Church are Metamorphosed into Paganizing Christians, or Practical Atheists. Tit. I 16 And are not only prodigiously corrupted in their Morals but fatally poisoned in their Politicks, Matchiavillian, and Jesuitical Tricks, having discarded the Old-World-Simplicity and Probity. Besides these professedly profane Miscreants, there are others also who contribute to lessen the Dignity and Vigour of Religion, Viz. Luke-warm Galilios, whom I find defined to my Hand, by a Citation in a Sermon printed at Edinburgh 1690. P. 10. where Galilio is personated to say, *Num floreat Religio, nil mihi Cura, num ruat Religio, nec mihi cura, mea est Religio curare meipsum. i. e.* I care not whether Religion sink or swim, sobeit all go well with me and mine; which may pass for a gay Gloss on Phil: 2 21. All seek their own Things, not the Things, which are Jesus Christs. Moreover they serve the same Irreligious Purpose, who making a Voluminous Profession of Religion yet in Practice run the Reverse thereof, as Ovid brings Medea saying. *Metam: L. 7. Lin. 28.*

Video meliora, proboque,

Deteriora sequor. --- i. e.

Altho' my Mind discerns the better Things,
And their Excellency approves, and sings,
Yet so unhappy am I, and unwise,
I thereof daily the Reverse practise.

As the Pagan Seneca above cited, did note the Impieties of his Time; so many worthy Divines in our Time, have lamented the like Immoralities among Christians: From whose Writing take the few following Passages.

The Author of the *whole Duty of Man, Det. of Ch. First. C. 20. P. 373.*

In the primitive Days of Christianity there was such an Abhorrence of all that was ill, that a vicious Person was lookt on as a Kind of Monster, or Prodigy, and like an out-ride Member cut off, as being not only dangerous, but noisom to the Body. But alas! the Scene is so changed, that the Church is now made up of such, as she then would have cast out. &c.

A. B. Tillotson Serm. 7. 1. V. P. 88.

Happy had it been for thee, that thou hadst been born a Jew, or a Turk, or a poor Indian, rather than being bred among Christians, and professing thy self of that Number, thou shouldest lead a vicious and unholy Life.

B. Beveridge, private Thoughts. Part. 2. P. 70.

What Sins have Jews, Turks and Infidels among them, which we have not as rise among our selves? Are they intemperate and luxurious? Are they given to Extortion, Rapine and Oppression? So are most of those, who are called Christians. Do they blaspheme the Name of GOD, profane his Sabbaths, condemn his Word, and Ordinances? &c. How many have we among our selves, that do these as much as they.

Gurnel's Chr. Armour Part. 2. P. 344.

I truly think there are worse Atheists to be found under the Meridian Light of the Gospel, than in the darkest Nook in America. As Weeds grow rankest in richest Grounds, and Fruits ripest in hottest Climates, so do Sins grow to the greatest Height, where the Gospel-Sun climbs highest. *Isa. 42. 19.* Who such Atheists as these that have their Eyes put out by the Light of the Gospel?

We add here our *Melancholy Remark* too, That in this degenerate Age; too many Christians labour under a self deluding Mistake, in their Notion of what makes a real Christian: Accounting it Religion enough, that a Person be baptized, attend publick Temple Service, keeping up an outward Form of Godliness and Devotion; tho' they tarnish these with many foul Vices: But Christianity in the true Lustre, and Power of it, lies chiefly in the gracious Disposition, and Operations of the inward Man, such as entire Resignation to the Will of GOD in all Things: Suppressing turbulent Passions: Mortifying the Lusts of the Flesh; Bearing Afflictions With Patience, Silence and Fortitude

mode: Self-denial to our own Inclinations, Ease, Applause, Pleasures and Profits: Unfeigned Charity to all Men; Abstaining from all Appearance of Evil: And daily worshipping GOD in Spirit and Truth: To which requisite Properties and Practices, the most Part of Men are utter Strangers, nay hate them. It is also a prime Part of the Christian Character, as inwardly to bear the Image of Christ, so outwardly to resemble him in the Practice of his immutable Actions and Offices, that by following his Example, and wearing his Livery, it may appear unto all, we are his true Disciples.

We wish all who profess to know GOD, may passionately deplore the uncommon Vices of this dangerous Age. But specially it is incumbent on *Magistrates and Ministers*, to exert their respective Powers for detecting and suppressing the *Blasphemous Clubs of this Time*: Neither *Civil Penaltys*, nor *Ecclesiastick Censures*, can be more justly employed, than in this *helping the LORD against the Mighty*; the neglect whereof may be followed with the *Curse of Meroz*, *Judg: 5 23*. But moreover the Ministers both of Church and State, should not only discourage Vice, by *Condign Prosecutions* of the Vicious but also should *Discountenance* it, by *Exemplary Virtue and Sobriety*, in all the *Branches* thereof, for the good or bad Practices of *Superiors*, have a mighty Influence, to draw *Inferiors* into an Imitation of them, as *Claudian* says *de 4 Consul: Honorii. P. 55.*

--- *Non sic Inflectere Sensus.*

Humanos, Edicta valent, quam Vita Regentis, i. e.
 Good Laws tho' executed Vigrouslly,
 Wont so much bridle bold Impiety,
 As good Example of Superiors may
 Conduce, the Vicious *Vulgars* mind to sway,
 To Peace and Probity ---

The Practical Atheist.

HAD I *Hercules* his Faculty
 Of Weeping, I would pour from Heart and Eye,
 Both Night and Day, of Briny Tears a Stream,
 To water every Line of this sad Trame,

In deep *Condolence* of the horrid Crimes
 Of *Christians Paganizing* in our Times,
 So far, that *Turks* and *Tartars* would think *Shame*,
 Of their infamous *Vices* to incur the *Blame*.
 Our *Muse* is much reluctant to rehearse,
 What's so unworthy, or of *Prose*, or *Verse*.
 Yet she can't pretermit to *saryrize*,
 On these new *Clubs* of *Hells* Emissaries.
 O *Heav'n*! O *Earth*! stand stun'd to hear and spy,
 This unexempl'd threatening *Prodigy*,
 More *Melancholy* than the blackest *Tragedy*.
 Rank *Atheism* reigns, and Wantons in our Day,
Clubs meet, odd *Stygian Axioms* to display,
 Swearing *Religion's* but a crafty *Trick*,
 Of *Priests*, or soddolous *State-politick*.
 Nay, of *Reveal'd Religion*, the whole *Scheme*,
 To be imposture frontless they *Blaspheme*.
 On every *Theme* the sacred *Cade* they wrest,
 T'embellish a foul *Tale*, or scurvy *Fest*.
 They *Temple Service* nickname *formal Cant*,
 Only the *Female Sex* fit to enchant,
Heroes of *Masc'line Sp'rit* are not so weak,
 That *Pulpit-Cannons* should their *Sense*, and *Reason* shake.
 Discourses of a future *Heav'n* and *Hell*,
 No more affect them than an *Infidel*,
 Who sets them on a *Level* with *Romance*,
 Or *fabulous Tales* of *Visions* in a *Trance*.
 Ev'n the *Eternal Awful Trinity*,
 With seeming great *Assurance* they deny.
 Which uncouth *Tenets* take, and speed so well,
 Shoals charmed are to dance their *Way to Hell*.
 These *Fops* are known by their odd *Livery*
 Of more than *Heathnisch* *Immorality*,
 Their *Course of Life* is a continu'd *Scene*.
 Of *Actions Vicious*, *Villanous*, *Obscene*;
 Their furious *Lusts*, are both their *Lords* and *Lows*,
 Whereby they're hurl'd into the *Devil's* jaws:
 It is their *Element* and constant *Way*,
 To roar, and rant, to whore, carouse and play,
 And mirrily in sensual *Pleasures* swine,
 Not reck'ning either on the *Shame* or *Crime*.

Or what will be the hazardful Event
Of golden Hours so wretchedly mispent,
Their wicked Minds stuff'd with *Serpentine Spite*,
All who in Vertue shine, and are upright,
They hate, they mock, and vex them what they can,
As being none of their *malignant Clan*.
Which *Epicurish Miscreants*, and *Swiue*,
Revering *Laws*, nor *Human* nor *Divine*,
Are a Reproach unto the *Christian Name*,
Baptized Faces reddening with Shame,
And giving Cause of stumbling to the *Jew*,
And all who *Jesus Christ* do d. savow :
Who runs may lead, such as Religion sooff,
At this mad Rate, *Christ's Liv'ry* have cast off,
Whereof th' *Embroideries*, are Piety,
Truth, Justice, Meekness and Humility.
'Gainst these *Hell-Fire Clubs*, who rave at this Rate,
All publick *Ministers of Church and State*,
Should vig'rouly their Powers and Pains employ,
Them, and their Haunts to ferret and destroy :
And thou'd them from *Christ's Synagogues* expel,
As execrable *Tools* and *Imps of Hell*.
The Sword they bear by Sanction of *Heav'n's Laws*,
Can't be unsheathed in a better Cause,
Than to retrieve *GOD's* leased Majesty,
From ignominious grossest *Blasphemy*.
E'en *Pagans* wont brook their false *Gods* to be
Expos'd unto Contempt and Ludibrie.
Alas the primitive *Heroick Zeal*
Doth in all Churches, with a Witness fail ;
The most *their own Things* minding with more Care,
Than how it doth with *Zion's* Matters fare,
Some *Ethricks*, who ne're own'd nor could descry
The *Con-substantial* sacred *Trinity*,
Yet in their *Morals* very blameless were,
And common Vices did abandon far :
Such as these *Heroes*, *Zeno*, *Socrates*,
Epictet, *Solon*, *Seneca*, *Thales*,
The *Stagerite*, and *Plato* the *Divine*,
Who did in brightsom Vertues far outshine
Many who bear the honourable Name

Christians, to their everlasting Shame,
 Which *Christless Christians* Drivels in Disguise,
 Their *Strygian* Sire may justly Canonize,
 His fable *Kalendar* of witty *Fools*,
 Woulded to be his *Decoys*, and fit Tools
 Both Vertue and Religion to disgrace,
 And in their Lieu Impiety to place,
 Which tendeth to disturb the *Publick Poets*.
 And if not heeded may Great Britain make
 Sodom, and in Justice to partake
 Of her uncommon desolating Woes,
 A standing Monument of Heav'n's avenging Blows.
 O let it not in *Pagan Gath* be told,
 That any *Christian* is so base and bold,
 As thus his GOD and *Baptism* to blaspheme,
 And to expose the Son of GOD to Shame:
 Which looks like *Pythagoric Transmigration*
 Of *Turkish* Souls into a Christian Nation.
 Howbeit, this debauched Age can shew
 Of such vile Monsters a most direful Crew,
 Who Drivel ridden with Gigantic Spite
 Combate Heav'n's King, 'gainst Nature's glaring Light,
 And 'gainst the universal joint Suffrage
 Of all from Adam to this present Age;
 And likewise 'gainst the Doctrine of the Skyes,
 And all the Lights that therein set and rise:
 As moreover 'gainst all the Evidence
 Shines from the checker'd Work of Providence;
 Which may convince, who will but look and see,
 There's an All-making and All-ruling Entitie.
 Yet, strange: such *Atheists*, of Men of Sense,
 And of brave Souls the Title do commence,
 And to themselves fondly Monopolize
 The Name of Champions for true Liberties.
 Nay these *Pygmies* in Sense must pass for Wits,
 Tho' in their frantic *Bacchanalian* Fits,
 Without or Wit, or Sense, the *Fops* express
 The Top-degree of Madcap Foolishness,
 And justly may be dub'd the daring Knights
 Of the new Order of chain'd *Bedlamites*.
 Altho' these wretched Wits themselves may cleave

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With their delirious wildest Phantasies,
And tho' Heav'n seem upon their Pranks to smile,
Letting them sport with bairied Hook a while,
Yet long affronted and abused Grace,
Will not last ay; rouz'd Justice will take Place,
These Causees with full Vengeance to apay,
Without or further Mercy or Delay.
An Inundation of Impieties,
Will fetch a Deluge of Calamities,
Not only temporal, but after Death,
Without all doubt long superseded Wrath,
Hotter than Aetna's glowing Flashes shall
Assail each Atheistic Criminal:
And when ingulph'd in never ebbing Flows
Of exquisite intollerable Woes,
Then, as the Devil, shall they to their Cost
Believe there is a GOD, and no more boast,
Of Wit, or list, rashly to vilify
The King of Kings, or mock his Majesty.
O mad Men. spare some Minutes of your Days
To ponder, and reflect upon your Ways,
From Sceptic, Tenets disingage your Mind,
Which have your Thoughts in Atheism twind;
Both Reason, and Religion; with one Voice
Agree, such make the best and wisest Choice,
Who Vertue love, and practise Piety,
Preferring them to Vice and Villany.
But as is hinted, if sincere Repentance,
And boundless Mercy don't prevent the Sentence,
Each Atheist, nill he, will he, shall go down
To Pluto's Palace, be he King, or Clown.
But such as do GOD know, fear and adore,
In Paradise above, shall ever more
Enjoy a Jubile: And with the Chimes
Of Lyres sonorous, and sweet vocal Hymns,
Make all the Arches of the Azure Pole
To ring; while they Heav'n's Monarch jovially extol,
As long, as he shall reign,
And glorious Seraphs sing.
F I N I S.



There are to give notice, that
there is lately published a Book by
James Porterfield, - Edinburgh's English
Schoolmaster, - which is approved of
by the Colleges of Edinburgh and
Glasgow, to be easiest way for
teaching children to read English or
Latin, as hitherto hath been ex-
tant. Also this year 1712 hath
drawn ~~up~~ out of his ellygnum in
Parvo a way for the reading any
Chapter of Solomon's Proverbs at
sight because of the introduction
to the syllables thereof. Either
or both of the books are to be
had at his House the second stair
on the North side of the High Street
above the Weigh house.

Scots Postman, or the Edinburgh
Gazette. 15th to 17th May 1712.